

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## ASPHODEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "VIKEN," "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET," ETC.

### CHAPTER XXVI. "FORBID A LOVE AND IT IS TEN TIMES SO WODE."

SIR VERNON showed himself especially gracious to his younger daughter and her lover next morning at breakfast, when the itinerary of their holiday was discussed. So far as his own pleasure was concerned he would have liked nothing better than to go straight to Montreux, where a delightful villa, with a garden sloping to the lake, had been secured for his accommodation; but he did not forget that Daphne had seen nothing of Switzerland, and Edgar very little; and for their sake he was ready to make considerable sacrifices.

"I am a wretched traveller, and I detest sight-seeing," he said languidly; "but I don't wish to spoil other people's pleasure. Suppose we make a little round before we settle down in our villa by the lake? Let us go to Fribourg and hear the organ, and then on to Berne for a day or so, and then to Interlaken. There I can rest quietly in my own rooms at the Jungfrau Blick, while you young people drive to Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald, and do any little climbing in a mild way which is compatible with the safety of your necks and bones generally; and then we can come straight back to Montreux. How would you like that, Madoline?"

"Very much, indeed, dear father. It will be a delight to me to go over the old ground with Daphne."

"And you, Goring?"

"I am Lina's slave—her shadow; true as the dial to the sun."

"Papa," said Daphne, drawing her chair

nearer to him, and with a coaxing look which no man but a father could have resisted, "it is so good of you to propose such a charming trip, and I shall enjoy it immensely; but would it be any way possible, now we are so near, to go to Chamounix, and get to the top of Mont Blanc; or, at least, part of the way up?"

"No, my dear. Quite out of the question."

"But it is only a drive to Chamounix; and there is a diligence goes every morning."

"Edgar can take you there next year, when you are married. I am too old for a drive of fourteen hours' duration."

Daphne looked miserable. Mont Blanc was the central point of all her desires. It irked her to be so near and not to reach the world-famous mountain. She looked at Edgar doubtfully. No; she could not realise the idea of coming back next year, alone with him. She had never been able to project her mind into that future in which they two should be one, bound by a sacred yoke, doomed to be for ever together. From any casual glance at such a future her mind always shrank away shudderingly, as from the dim memory of a bad dream.

"I don't believe I shall ever come to Switzerland again," she said discontentedly, when breakfast was finished and her father had retired to his own room to write letters.

Madoline was sitting at work by an open window; silken water-lilies and bulrushes developing themselves gradually under her skilful fingers on a ground of sage-green cloth. The tables were covered with books and miniature-stands; the room was bright with flowers, and looked almost as home-like as South Hill; but before the evening Mowser and Jinman would have

packed all these things, and despatched the greater part of them to Montreux, while the travellers went on to Fribourg in light marching order, which in this case meant about three portmanteaux per head. Some books must, of course, be taken, and drawing materials, and fancy-work, and a writing-desk or two, and camp-stools for sitting about in romantic places, and a good deal more, which made a formidable array of luggage by-and-by, when Sir Vernon and his family were assembled at the railway-station.

"Do you mean to tell me that we require all these things for a week or ten days?" he said, scowling at the patient Jinman, who was standing on guard over a compact pyramid of trunks, portmanteaux, and Gladstone bags, umbrellas, sunshades, and heterogeneous etceteras.

"I don't think there's anything could have been dispensed with, Sir Vernon," answered Jinman. "The books and ornaments, and most of the heavy luggage have gone on to Montrooks."

"Great Heaven, in the face of this would any man marry, and make himself responsible for feminine existences!" exclaimed Sir Vernon, shrugging his shoulders disgustedly as he turned away; yet Jinman could have informed him that his own share of the luggage was quite equal to that of his daughters.

They were all established presently in a German railway compartment: Sir Vernon seated in his corner and absorbed in an English newspaper, whose ample sheet excluded every glimpse of lake and wooded slopes, Alps and Jura; while Edgar smoked on the platform outside, and Daphne stood at the open door, gazing at the changing landscape: the smiling lake below; the dark slopes and mountain range on the further shore; the villages nestling in the valley on this nearer bank, the cosy little homesteads and bright gardens; the vine-clad terraces, divided by low grey walls; the quaint old churches, with tiled roofs and square clock-towers; and yonder, far away at the end of the lake, Chillon's gloomy fortress, which she recognised with a cry of delight, having seen its presentment in engravings and photographs, and knowing Byron's poem by heart.

She gave a sigh of regret as a curve of the line carried her away from the azure lake, and its panorama of hills.

"I can hardly bear to leave it," she said; "but, thank Heaven, we are coming back to it soon."

"You are reconciled to Switzerland, then, in spite of your disillusiones," said Gerald.

"Reconciled! I should like to live and die here."

"What! abandon your beloved Shakespeare's country?"

"I am heartily sick of Shakespeare's country."

"Daphne!" cried Edgar with a look of deepest mortification; "that is a bad lookout for poor old Hawksyard."

"Hawksyard is a dear old place, but I don't want to be reminded of it—or of anything else in Warwickshire—now I am in Switzerland. I want to soar, if I can. I am in Byron's country. He lived there," pointing downwards to where they had left Lausanne and Ouchy. "He wrote some of his loveliest poetry there; his genius is for ever associated with these scenes. Sad, unsatisfied spirit!"

Her eyes filled with sudden tears at the thought of that disappointed life; seeking solace from all that is loveliest in Nature; shunning the beaten tracks, yet never finding peace.

"If you are very good," said Gerald gravely, "within the next ten minutes I will show you something you are anxious to see."

"What is that?"

"Mont Blanc. Get your glass ready."

"Why we left him behind us, across the lake, sulkily veiled in impenetrable cloud."

"He will show himself more amiable presently. You will get a good view of him in five minutes, if you focus your glass properly and don't chatter."

Daphne spoke never a word, but stood motionless, with her landscape-glass glued to her eyes, and waited as for a divine revelation.

Yes, yonder it arose, white and cloudlike on the edge of the blue summer sky, the mighty snow-clad range of which Mont Blanc is but a detail—the grand inaccessible region; mountain top beyond mountain top; peak upon peak; everlasting, untrodden hills, producing nothing, pasturing nothing, stupendous and ghastly as the polar seas; a world apart from all other worlds; a spectacle to awe the dullest soul and thrill the coldest heart; a revelation of Nature's titanic beauty.

"Oh, it must have been such mountains as those that the Titans hurled about them when they fought with Zeus," cried Daphne, when she had gazed and gazed till the

last gleam of those white crests vanished in the distance.

"Do you feel better?" asked Gerald, with his mocking smile.

"I feel as if I had seen the world that we are to know after death," answered Daphne.

"Would you be surprised to hear that these excrescences, which you think so grand, are but modern incidents in the history of the earth. Time was when Switzerland was one vast ice-field: nay, if we can believe Lyell, the clay of London was in course of accumulation as marine mud, at a time when the ocean still rolled its waves over the space now occupied by some of the loftiest Alpine summits."

"Please don't be instructive," exclaimed Daphne. "I want to know nothing about them, except that they are there, and that they are beautiful."

At Fribourg they drove down the narrow street to the Zähringer Hof, the hotel by the suspension bridge, where from a balcony they looked down a sheer descent to the river, and to the roofs and chimneys of the old town lying in a cleft of the hills, and yonder, suspended in mid-air, a mere spider thread across the sky, stretched the upper and longer bridge. It was nearly dinner-time when they arrived; there were dark clouds on the horizon, and only gleams of watery sunshine behind the grey old watch-towers on the crest of the hill across the river.

"I'm afraid we are going to have another storm," said Gerald, lounging against the embrasure of a window, and looking as if Fribourg, with its modern suspension-bridges and mediæval watch-towers, were just the most uninteresting place in the world. He looked thoroughly worn-out and weary, as if he had been labouring hard with body and mind all day, instead of lolling in a railway-carriage, staring listlessly at the landscape. Sir Vernon, the ostensible invalid, was not more languid.

"Let it come down," cried Daphne; "but whatever the weather may be, I shall go and hear the organ after dinner. There is the bell for vespers. How nice it is to find oneself in a Roman Catholic town, with vesper-bells ringing, and dear old priests and nuns and all sorts of picturesque creatures walking about the streets."

They dined in their own sitting-room, Sir Vernon having a good old English dislike to any intercourse with unintroducted fellow-creatures: to sit at a table-d'hôte with the Tom, Dick, and Harry of cockney

Switzerland would have been abhorrent to him.

"We may get a worse dinner in our own room," he said, looking doubtfully at some unknown spoon-food offered to him by way of an entrée, "but we avoid rubbing shoulders with the kind of people who travel nowadays."

"Are they so much worse than the people who used to travel——"

"When I was a young man? Yes, Daphne, quite a different race," said Sir Vernon with authority. "Gerald was right. We are in for another storm."

A quiver of livid light, a crash of thunder, and black darkness yonder behind the hills gave emphasis to his statement. Daphne flew to the window to look at the bridges and the towers, which were almost expunged from the face of creation by a thick blinding rain. A waggon was crawling across the nearer and lower bridge, and the whole fabric rocked under its weight.

"Nobody will dream of going to the cathedral to-night," said Sir Vernon.

But the waiter in attendance declared that everyone would go. There would be a concert on the great organ from eight to nine. The cathedral was close by; there would be a carriage in waiting at ten minutes to eight to convey those guests who graciously deigned to patronise the concert, for which the waiter was privileged to dispose of tickets. Furthermore, the storm would assuredly abate before long. It was but a thunder-shower.

Daphne stood at the window watching the thunder-shower, which seemed to be drowning the lower town and flooding the river. The rain came down in torrents; the thunder roared and bellowed over the hills; the chain-work of the suspension-bridge rattled.

Sir Vernon protested that the storm made him nervous, and retired to his room, leaving the young people to do as they pleased.

They sat in the stormy dusk sipping their coffee, ready to put on their hats and be off the minute the carriage was announced. Daphne wore a gown of some creamy-white material, which gave her a ghostly look in the gloom.

"You have heard this famous organ, Lina," she said. "Is it really worth stopping at Fribourg on purpose to hear it: when, with a little more time and trouble, one might get half-way up Mont Blanc?"

"It is a wonderful organ, but you will be able to judge for yourself in a few minutes."



"We should have been getting near Chamounix by this time, if we had started by this morning's diligence," sighed Daphne.

"Restless, unsatisfied soul! still harping on the mountain," said Gerald.

"I have seen him, at least," exclaimed Daphne, clasping her hands; "that is something. Far, far away, like a glimpse of another world: but still I have seen him. Shall we see him again to-morrow, do you think, on the way to Interlaken?"

"I'm afraid not. To-morrow I shall have the honour to introduce you to the Jungfrau."

"I don't care a straw for her," exclaimed Daphne contemptuously.

"What! not for Manfred's mountain? Can you, who have so devoured your Byron, be indifferent to the background of that gloomy individual's existence?"

"There is an interest in that, certainly; but Mont Blanc is my beau-ideal of a mountain."

Here the carriage was announced. The two girls put on their hats and wraps, soft China crape and Nurepore chuddah shawls, and hurried down to the hall. The rain was still falling, the thunder still grumbling amidst distant hills. They crowded into the fly, and were jolted over stony and uneven ways to the cathedral.

They went in at a narrow little door to a great dark church, with solitary lamps dotted about here and there in the gloom. Everything had a mysterious look; the richly-carved oak, the shrines, the chapels, the shrouded altar far away at the end.

There were, perhaps, a hundred people sitting about in high narrow pews, with massive carved oak seats, sitting here and there in a scattered way, all wrapt in shadow and gloom, silent, overawed, expectant.

Madoline and Daphne walked side by side up the long nave, between two lines of oaken seats, the two men following; then, midway between the organ and the altar, they went into one of the pews, Lina first, then Daphne. She had been sitting there a minute or so looking about the dim dark church before she discovered that it was Gerald, and not Edgar, who sat by her side. Edgar had taken the seat behind them.

They sat there for five or ten minutes hushed and listening; the rain splashing on the roof, the distant thunder reverberating; nothing to be seen in the vast building but those yellow lamps gleaming here and

there, and lighting up an isolated carved niche with its statue, or a pulpit, or a clustered column.

At last, when the silence, broken only by faintest whisperings among the expectant audience, had endured for what seemed a weary while, the organ pealed forth in a grand burst of sound, which swept along the arched roof, and filled the church with music. Then after that crash of mighty chords, came tenderest phrases, a flowing melody that sank low as a whisper, and then that strain of almost supernatural likeness to the human voice rose up above the legato arpeggios of the accompaniment, and thrilled every ear—tender, angelic, a divine whisper of love and melancholy. Daphne had risen from her seat, and stood with her arms resting upon the massive wood-work in front of her, gazing up through the darkness towards that glimmering spot of light yonder, near the arch of the roof, which showed where the organ was, far away, mysterious.

Oh, that heavenly voice, with its soul-moving sadness! A rush of tears streamed from her eyes; she stretched out her hands, unconsciously, as if yearning for some human touch to break the mournful spell of that divine sorrow, and the hand nearest Gerald was clasped in the darkness; clasped by a warm strong hand which held it and kept it—kept it without a struggle, for, alas! it lay unresistingly in his. They drew a little nearer to each other involuntarily, shudderingly happy—with the deep sense of an unpardonable guilt, a shameful treason, yet forgetting everything except that vain foolish love against which both had fought long and valiantly.

A peal of thunder on the organ within, an answering peal from the storm without; the mimic tempest blended itself with heaven's own artillery; and at the terrible sound those guilty creatures in the church let go each other's hands. Daphne clasped hers before her face, and sank on her knees.

"Pity me and help me, oh, God," she prayed, and looking up she saw just above her in a marble niche the image of the Mother of God; and in this moment of temptation and self-abandonment, it seemed to her a natural thing that women should ask a woman's mediation in their hour of sorrow.

Dies Iræ pealed from the organ with an awful grandeur which thrilled every listener; and then came a silence, and after that the low murmur of the storm dying away



in the distance, from the overture of William Tell, the flute-like tones of the *ranz des vaches*, telling of pastoral valleys and solemn mountains, a life of Arcadian innocence and peace.

With those lighter, gayer strains the concert ended, and they all went slowly and silently out of the church. The storm was over, and the moon was breaking through dark clouds.

"Don't let us go back in that jingling abomination of a fly," said Gerald, striding on over the wet pavement, leaving the two girls to follow with Edgar Turchill.

They picked their way through the streets. The town was all dark and quiet, save for a glimmering yellow candle here and there under a gable; there was none of the brightness and out-of-door life of a French town. A couple of omnibuses and a fly or two carried off the people who had been in the cathedral to their several hotels.

Gerald Goring was waiting for them in front of the *Zähringer*.

"What made you hurry on so?" asked Madoline wonderingly.

"Did I hurry? I think it was you others who crawled. That music irritated my nerves a little. It is full of studied effects; the organist has trained himself to play upon the emotions of his audience, now rising into a heaven of seraph voices, now going down to the depths of Pandemonium. The thunderstorm and the organ together would have been too much for anybody. Oh, pray don't go indoors yet," he exclaimed, as they were all three moving towards the entrance of the hotel. "Let us go for a walk on the bridge. Don't you know that after the organ the great feature of Fribourg is the bridge?"

"If we are to be on our way to Inter-laken to-morrow, we had better see all we can to-night," said the practical Edgar.

They went on the bridge; Gerald still walking ahead, and keeping in some wise aloof from them. Daphne had not spoken since they left the cathedral.

"Had the music an unpleasant effect upon you too, dear, that you are so silent?" Madoline asked, as they two walked side by side.

"It was only too beautiful," answered Daphne.

"And you are glad we came here?"

"No. Yes. I would rather have been half-way up Mont Blanc."

"Poor darling! but that is a pleasure in reserve for another holiday. I know

Edgar will take you wherever you like to go."

"Do you think so? What a dance I shall lead him," cried Daphne with a mocking laugh. "I shall not be content with Mont Blanc or the Matterhorn. I shall insist upon seeing all the extinct volcanoes, the wonderful fiery mountains that have burned themselves out. Cotopaxi is about the mildest hill he will be invited to climb."

Mr. Turchill had dropped into the background, and was quietly enjoying his cigar, unaware of the pleasures in store for him. Gerald walked ever so far ahead, cigarless, a gloomy figure.

"I'm afraid either the thunder or the organ has given Gerald one of his dreadful headaches," said Lina anxiously.

The moon showed herself fitfully athwart hurrying clouds, now lighting up hills and watch-towers, river and rugged ravine, with a wild *Salvator Rosa*-esque effect, now hidden altogether, and leaving all in gloom. Midway upon the bridge Madoline and Daphne stopped, and stood looking down into the hollow below with the quiet sleeping town, its quaint street lamps, and rare gleams of light from narrow casements, and stony ways shining after the rain. Here, when they had stood for some minutes, Edgar joined them, having finished his cigar, and he and Madoline began to talk about the place; he questioning, she expounding its features.

While they two were talking, Gerald came slowly back, and stood by Daphne's side, a few paces apart from the others. She said never a word. They stood side-by-side for some minutes like statues. She was wondering if he could hear the passionate throbbing of her heart, which would not be stilled.

They were standing thus, as if bound by a spell, when a heavy waggon came creeping slowly along the bridge, making the spot on which they stood tremble and rock under their feet.

"We are hanging by a thread between time and eternity," said Gerald, drawing closer to her. "What if the thread were to snap, and drop us, hand in hand, into the black gulf of death?"

She did not shudder at the thought, but turned and looked at him in the moonlight, with a strange sad smile.

"Would you be glad?" he asked softly.

"Yes," she answered, between a sigh and a whisper, still looking up at him with that pathetic smile; and his eyes looked fondly

down into hers, losing themselves in the depths of a fathomless mystery.

"Do you know that this bridge is the second longest in the world, three hundred yards long, and a hundred and sixty-eight yards above the river?" asked Edgar Turchill's matter-of-fact tones, as he walked towards them, cheerful, contented, pleased with himself and all the world.

"For God's sake spare us a gush of second-hand Baedeker," cried Gerald with intense irritation. "As if any living soul, except a Cook's tourist, could care how many feet or how many yards long a bridge is. It is the effect one values, the general idea that one is on that very bridge of Al Sirât, laid over the midst of hell, and finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword, over which the righteous must pass to Mahomet's paradise. It is the notion of man's audacity in making perilous ways that is really delightful. When that waggon went across just now, I thought the last straw was being laid, and we were all going."

Edgar came round to Daphne with a calm air of proprietorship which made her shudder.

"What an interesting evening we have had," he said.

"Very."

"You look pale and tired. Has it all been too much for you?" he asked tenderly.

"I think that organ would be too much for anyone."

"Do you know—I am no judge, and you mustn't laugh at me for expressing an opinion—I hardly thought it equal, as an organ, to the one at St. Paul's. I took my mother there once when all the charity-children were assembled. I can't tell you what a grand sight it was, the cathedral lined with their fresh young faces."

"Oh, for pity's sake don't talk about it," cried Daphne, almost hysterically. "To compare that dark solemn cathedral, with just a few people dotted about among the shadows, and the thunder pealing over the roof—to compare that with that pagan St. Paul's, lined with rosy-cheeked children, all white caps and pinafores and yellow worsted stockings!"

"I was talking of the organ," replied Edgar, somewhat offended.

"Then why introduce the charity-children? Oh, please let my thoughts dwell upon that dark church to-night; let me remember the music, the darkness."

"Daphne, dearest one, you are crying," exclaimed Edgar, startled at the sound of a stifled sob.

"Who would not cry at such music?"

"But so long after. You are nervous and hysterical."

"I am only tired. Please don't worry me," retorted Daphne fretfully, wrapping herself tightly in her soft grey shawl, and quickening her pace.

She said not a word more till they were inside the Zähringer Hof, when she wished the other three a brief good-night, declaring herself utterly worn out, and tripped lightly upstairs to her room on the second storey. Madoline's room was next her sister's, and when she went up a few minutes later, and knocked at the door of communication between the two rooms, Daphne excused herself from opening it.

"I'm dreadfully sleepy, dear," she said; "please leave me alone for to-night!"

"Willingly, dearest, if you are sure you are not ill."

"Not the least in the world."

"And is there nothing you want Mowser to do for you?"

"Nothing. She has unpacked my things. I have everything I want."

"Then good-night, and God bless you."

"Good-night," answered Daphne, but invoked no blessing upon the sister she loved so well. Prayer breathed from such a guilty heart would be almost blasphemy.

She walked up and down the room for a long time, up and down, up and down, her soul filled with ineffable joy. Yes; guilty, treacherous, vile, ungrateful as she knew herself to be, she could not stifle that wild sense of happiness, the rapture of knowing herself beloved by the man she loved. Nothing but evil could ever come out of that love; nothing but struggle, and sorrow, and pain; yet it was delight to have been loved, the one perfect joy which was possible for her upon this earth. To have missed it would have been never to have lived: and now death might come when it would. She had lived her life; she had had her day.

That this love was a thing of guilt, a scorpion to be crushed and trodden under her foot, she never questioned. Not for an instant did it enter into her mind that she could profit by Gerald Goring's inconstancy, that she was to take to herself the lover whose faith had been violated by to-night's revelation. Never did it occur to her that any alteration in his future or hers was involved in the admissions which each had made to the other.

"He knows that I love him; he knows how weak and vile I am," she said to her-

self. "If Lina were to know too? If she were to see me with the mask off my face, what a monster of perfidy and ingratitude I should seem to her. Oh, I should die of shame. I could never endure the discovery. And to make her unhappy—her to whom I owe so much, my dearest, my best, the guardian angel of my life. Oh, Lina, Lina, if you knew!"

She flung herself on her knees beside the bed, and, with hands clasped above her head, breathed her passionate prayer.

"Let me die to-night. Oh, Thou who knowest how vile and weak I am, let me die to-night."

### A TRAVELLER'S TALES.

#### A HELMET.

WHERE the religious fervour of a nation has fixed one central spot as holiest, the painter and philosopher will find material enough for study. It is said that a "revival" is impressive, though enthusiasm must needs be strong to master the impediment of our ugly English dress. That spectacle I have never seen, but it was granted me to watch a Mexican crowd, in an agony of fear, wailing its penitence and its prayers for mercy. Those who have beheld will not forget that sobbing throng which circulates about the shrine in Peter's house upon the Neva, dim in the smoke of incense, red in the light of innumerable candles, crying out, gesticulating, fainting in the crush and heat. But for picturesque effect, complete all round, daily worship in the Golden Temple at Amritsar will be hardly matched. One can only guess, no stranger has beheld, what it might be in seasons of danger to the faith. He who has seen the tearful excitement, heard the impassioned words, and marked the zeal of these simple manly folk in times of quietude, will be first to admit that imagination cannot form even an outline of that picture.

The Sikhs, they say, are declining in numbers and religious spirit. It may be so, and doubtless it is, since those best qualified to judge, and least anxious to have the truth revealed, declare the fact. The gooroos, or priests, lately petitioned the viceroy, on his visiting their temple, to enforce the ancient laws. They complained that the children brought to them for initiation, or whatever the ceremony may be called, are yearly diminishing in numbers, though the Sikhs, as a people, are certainly increasing fast. The viceroy, of course,

regretted that he could not arrest the threatened extinction of a faith which is as nearly perfect, in theory and in practice, as idolatry can be; but the outward tokens of decay are not yet visible. The Khalsa and the Grunt, the Sword and the Book, will last out our generation. Fresh layers of gold-leaf are daily added to the glittering temple walls. The costly pavement is repaired with marbles yet costlier. Faded frescoes are repainted, dimmed mirrors replaced. Before the draperies of cloth-of-gold or silken needlework are soiled, others more gorgeous are strewn above the holy books. Pious offerings pour in unceasingly; the population, young and old, pass their afternoons in listening to the preacher. The marble causeway bears a double swarm of devotees, going and returning; the marble tank is lined with zealous bathers. Perhaps the Sikh faith is dying; but what life remains is ecstatic.

The Golden Temple reminds one somewhat of St. Isaac's at St. Petersburg. Each building has a central dome, with turrets open and pillared like baldachins at each corner. But the Sikh temple is strangely flat and low, and resemblance ceases below the roof. It is all gold outside, from the apex of its dome to its marble pavement. An open cloister surrounds it, however, and the heavy dazzling ornament of the exterior is not carried through. The cloister, and the fane which it conceals, are built of white marble, inlaid with the most valuable stones in *pietra dura*. Under the friction of countless worshippers who pass and repass, crushed against the wall, these jewelled panels get defaced, and it is a work of merit to restore them to their pristine beauty. The cost varies. A Sikh gentleman enquired for me, and he learned that one just finished had cost sixty thousand rupees—say, five thousand pounds. There are not less than five hundred of these panels certainly.

The temple stands upon a platform of marble in a great square tank of marble, surrounded by marble balustrades, and a broad sunk pavement of marble, to which we descend by a marble staircase. Everything is holy inside the iron gates which close this golden paradise. Boots must be removed before setting foot in it, and Lord Lytton has not earned forgiveness for his attempts to disregard this sacred law by a present of one thousand rupees; leather is a substance peculiarly repugnant to the



feelings of every Hindoo. A very handsome causeway, marble of course, opening beneath an arch all glorious with gold, leads to the island temple. It is lined with beggars, fakirs, and pilgrims, who await a charitable inspector of the faithful. So do the huge fish, mouldy and blind, which lie with their ugly mouths agape beneath the balustrade. Those who have imagination strong enough may picture to themselves the many-coloured throng of worshippers who stream towards the island, or return, from sunrise to sunset; nay, for anything I know, from sunset to sunrise. Never did I see a pause.

The temple itself is small. Passing from the cloister through low silver doors, exquisitely carved, embossed, and chased, of which the value alleged is fabulous, one enters a square apartment scarce twenty feet across; an open colonnade runs round the small central space—the holy of holies—where lies the Grunt, the Sikh revelation. In this colonnade the faithful wait their turn to adore the sacred book, moving in a ceaseless stream. Thick white mats carpet the sanctuary, whereon, cross-legged, squats a blessed orchestra with flutes and odd stringed-instruments that wail and scream a music not unfitting to the scene. So tiny is the area within the columns, that the flowing robes of the performers cover it up, excepting a few feet down the middle and the space at one end required for the officiating priest. Wherever the mats are visible they are strewn with costly shawls, silk, cloth-of-gold, embroidery of most superb design and tint. Heaps of grain and cowries, piles of copper-coin, lie amongst these, tossed anyhow together, and they fall rattling as the players move their stiff limbs uneasily. The Grunt itself is enclosed in a large box, the glory of which I cannot describe, for it is hidden beneath a load of shawls, the most beautiful that human fancy can conceive or human patience execute. Over all these, trailing down the mats and tumbled by the shifting movements of the priest, is a great pall of silver tissue, which shimmers in the half-light. Overhead hangs the low dome, crimson and silver, gleaming with bits of looking-glass disposed in mathematical patterns. From the gallery above the colonnade dark faces framed in brilliant turbans look down upon the sanctuary.

The priest kneels beside the Grunt, and stretches out his hands above its sacred chest. While the orchestra plays a

wild accompaniment he ceaselessly intones a hymn, and his open palms travel to and fro like machinery, the left dropping money into a box beside him, the right giving flowers in exchange from a tray on the other side. The impatient and perfunctory manner of this priest contrasts with the hysteric fervour of the devotees. They sing, they cry aloud, gesticulate, and faint over the blossoms of the mogri, so carelessly distributed, but the throng urges them fast towards the opposite door. If there be any scene so strange and thrilling in the world, I have not beheld it. Religious enthusiasm, always an impressive sight, is nowhere envied by circumstances so delightful to the eye. The softened light, the rich colours of the dome, the gorgeous draperies, the spotless robes, the golden skins and perfect features of the girls, the majestic beauty of the men, form a picture such as no description could exaggerate. I mounted to the gallery above, and watched till I was almost dizzy with the shifting blaze of tints, the scream of music and the shrill intoning, the murmur of the people, the heat, and the sharp close smell.

Amritsur is a place interesting, I dare say, for many objects besides its Golden Temple, but I recollect only that supreme delight, and the trivial incident connected with my helmet. Strolling about the town, I was led to a shop rather famous for Cashmere goods—this is a great market for such articles. After beholding a thousand shawls or so—in earnest truth, the merchant would not suffer me to leave until a mass eighteen inches thick had accumulated round him—I bought a couple and departed. In the yard we met a boy, carrying some heavy object in a scarlet cotton rag. My servant spoke with him, and presently asked: "You want buy Indian man's head thing, sah'b?" Before I could demand an explanation, the child undid his bundle, and displayed a beautiful helmet, of the old Sikh form, familiar to most people. It might be described as a bowl-shaped cap of polished steel, fitted with three long plumesockets, one at the crown, and one above each brow. A heart-shaped piece of metal, at the end of a stout shaft, protects the nose; playing through a loop, which is fitted with a catch, it may be drawn up and secured when no danger threatens. All round the cap brim depends a curtain of chain-mail, short over the eyes, but long enough behind to guard the shoulders and the back. In this specimen, the nose-piece,

the plume-sockets, and an inch-wide circlet round the brim, were finely inlaid with gold, whilst the curtain was adorned with golden links disposed in an effective pattern. I asked the boy how much he wanted for this very graceful piece of armour, expecting he would name a heavy price. "A hundred and fifty rupees," said he; and within five minutes I secured it for one hundred, say, eight pounds ten shillings, to my great astonishment.

A lady dined with us that night, who, to many charms of mind and person, adds a singular shrewdness in the ways of native cunning. I displayed my shawls, not without emotion, for they were very beautiful, and they had cost me dear. The lady examined them with critical eye, and thrust her delicate finger through the embroidery. While I looked on speechless, she repeated this cruel operation here and there, until, with a burst of laughter, silvery, I admit, but painful to my feelings, she cried: "Dear Mr. B., your shawls are centuries old; most exquisite specimens for the British Museum, but too venerable for earthly ladies' wear."

I was so angry, I am so angry still, that if I could recollect the name of that hoary patriarch who swindled me, I would publish it here. It is a consolation to think that his nefarious dealings with the guileless and the trusting were widely advertised by indignant friends; but I chance to know that he does a large business with England direct. Those whom evil fate deliver to his hands may be pitied. More than a month elapsed before I could recover my rupees, though the old scoundrel knew he must pay, sooner or later.

The jokes that followed this incident I bore stoutly, conscious of a trump in hand. The helmet was produced.

"There, Mrs. R.," I exclaimed with confidence; "poke your finger or your fun through that!"

It was passed round with great admiration. But my excellent friend R. surveyed it closely and gravely, with puckered brows. "Why," said he, "unless I greatly mistake, this is one of the things stolen from the Runjeet Singh armoury at Lahore. How did you get it?"

"As a jest," I observed with dignity, "your idea does not bear comparison with Mrs. R.'s happy thought. If no one has a remark more amusing to suggest about my helmet, I will pack it up."

"Upon my honour, I am not joking," said R. "The armoury was robbed some

months ago, and I believe this is one of the objects stolen. You needn't be alarmed; nobody will tell; but I shouldn't wear that article much, if I were you, about the streets of Lahore."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. R. "What a picture fancy conjures up! Mr. B. publicly recognised by his helmet as the destined Gooroo, acclaimed by the populace, adored by the Khalsa, leading victorious armies, and seating himself upon the renovated throne of Runjeet Singh! Oh, what would become of us? Do not, do not be persuaded, dear Mr. B., to wear your helmet much in the streets of Lahore."

My unfortunate purchases had let me in for a supper of "chaff." Accepting the desperate situation, I replied: "In the consideration of your selfish interests you forget a higher question. Is the headdress becoming? If so, in a great statesman's immortal phrase, 'Perish India,' so long as I look nice." I put it on; he and she put it on; they all put it on; and everybody agreed that everybody else had never looked so pretty or so imposing, as the case might be. Man and woman, young and old, this superb headpiece fitted them all, and made them appear—the men grand, the women enchanting. Since coming home, I have tried it on subjects very unpromising, but it has never failed to beautify. Spectacles cannot destroy the martial effect; a false front, and all that delusion entails, do not impair the magic charm. When Mrs. R. put it on (I may say so here, some thousands of miles beyond reach of a jealous husband) she looked so divinely beautiful, that the old Athenians would have worshipped her as an incarnation of Pallas.

Returning to Lahore, I visited the armoury. Little remains of the palace built by Runjeet Singh, as of the palace of the Moghul emperors at Delhi; but I am willing to believe, in either case, that the parts best worth saving are preserved. The grand walls of the citadel stand erect at Lahore, and the fine gates, painted so incongruously with fantastic beasts and unnatural flowers. All through North India one seems to mark a struggle. Supreme taste and grandeur of architecture are injured by trivial tawdriness of decoration. History explains this anomaly. The taste is that of the conquering Moslem, the offence that of the Hindoo spirit asserting itself where it can. The long mastery of the Afghans in the Punjaub had used its people to the forms, the light and airy

elegance of that architecture which, modified but not degraded, is at root Saracenic. Runjeet Singh shared the feeling of his subjects. He did not conceive, probably he could not have found men to execute, another style of building, but he could and did show his nationality in the question of ornament. The walls are simple and majestic; the gates, though full of happy fancies, sudden quaint variations, have the graceful proportion of Afghan work. But Runjeet Singh has daubed them with pictures like those outside a travelling menagerie.

So far as I know, the other parts remaining of the palace-fortress are the Durbar Hall, with its adjoining chambers, and the exquisite summer-house. It will be understood that I describe from memory alone. Matters not more important in history, but much more pressing at the time, occupied my too brief visit to India. Without notes or references it is quite possible that I should commit an error here and there in details. No more than a rough sketch is intended.

At Delhi, at Agra, one's capacity of holding and retaining lovely visions is flooded. A certain impatience at the languor of our slow senses fills the mind; realised there in stone are dreams which have been shadowy and shapeless, too beautiful, too strange, to be admitted even in sleep. No monument in all the world, unless it be the Alhambra, compares for sensuous delight with the Durbar Hall at Delhi; for magnificence, solid and imposing, with Akbar's palace at Agra; for absolute perfection with the Taj Mahal. The Delhi architect knew the merit of his work, and proclaimed it. In every corner of the hall he wrote, in characters of gold: "If there be paradise on earth, it is here, it is here!" From my soul I pity those who cavil at the artist's boast. Paradise, say these, or would say, if they could express their inarticulate ideas, is not made of barley-sugar, coloured sweetmeats, and looking-glass. Paradise is mystic, solemn; an abode through eternity of strong and pious souls, not of luxurious fays. If you tempt these critics to explain themselves more fully, you will see that in their heart of hearts they imagine that the soul, whatever its nationality while incarnate, becomes true British after death. The paradise of Delhi is not even European. It is like nothing they ever saw, or could have fancied; it is, in truth, sunshine and colour petrified, and, because our happy land is not familiar with sunshine, whilst our habits forbid us

colour, the average Briton cannot see those blessed gifts of the Creator. That the eye sees only what it looks for, is an axiom in art. When a commonplace observer stands before a tablet in the palace wall, and marks its exquisite inlaying, as careful in the minutest point as in the mass of flowers; when he surveys the marble screens, carved into lace, admitting a soft radiance which is to light as moonbeams to sunshine, he is astonished and delighted. But it presently comes home to him that these lovely things are not pictures, but the very wall itself, that every gap is filled with marble guipure delicate as a Chinese fan—and he revolts. As *bric-à-brac*, as bits to display under a glass case in the drawing-room, these things are charming. But a grand edifice all built of such is a monstrous idea. Where are the broken lines, the "cloud-capped towers," which make our European notion of great architecture? Where are the shadows, the unexpected changes, the upstairs and downstairs, and the general disarrangement which we are used to call "picturesque." Nowhere.

Another class of critics take a loftier view. They say: This is beautiful workmanship, unsurpassed for delicacy of feeling, a world's wonder of its sort. But how far below the chastity, the dignified composure of that early style which suggested this school of taste. We might almost credit that the supreme genius who designed the Taj Mahal—he may have been an Italian, permeated with the spirit of the beautiful life around him, or he may have been a Persian, an Afghan, or a Hindoo, as different legends state—whoever he was, we might almost believe that he had a prescient thought of such criticism when he did this work. Three or four miles from Delhi stands the tomb of Sufter Jung, the vizier of Ahmed Shah, a building of red sandstone, which charms the eye of all who see it—cognoscenti or heretic, officer of Engineers or Tommy Atkins, Englishman or native. This monument is a reduction of the Taj, stone for stone, barring the minarets, in such material as the courtier could afford; the price was two hundred thousand pounds any way. Being in red sandstone, it has effects of shadow; unincalculated, it has simplicity which the glory of Agra was not designed to have. An exact reproduction, nevertheless, and it is enthusiastically admired, in their innocence, by those who declare the Taj, for all its beauty, to be low art. What is the conclusion to be



drawn? That the detractors' real objection is not against the building, but against the material, to which he is unused; against the snow-white colour and pale blueshadows, which seem unnatural to his eye.

The Hindoo population had no cause to love its Moslem masters. Facts are established, not by tradition, nor by history alone, but by published laws, which prove such incredible and fantastic tyranny as the world has seldom shuddered at. The two millions sterling—or was it twelve? I forget—which this building cost, were dragged with blood and tears from the subject people. But the Hindoo has forgotten all that in his astonishment and delight. We do not know much of Mumtaz Mahal, for whose sepulchre Shah Jehan raised the Taj. No incident relating to her dwells in my mind, save the tradition that she used to come daily, whilst the monument was rising, and play hide-and-seek with her ladies there. The gorgeous halls around the central dome were filled with slabs of marble, and here the court-dames had a thousand frolics. Nur Jahan, the Indian Helen, was a leading personage in her day, whose intrigues and ambitions caused a million deaths, and moved the destiny of empires. Volumes have been written on her doings, whilst all we learn of Mumtaz is that she made a playground of her tomb. But Nur Jahan is forgotten of the people, who worship the spirit of the Taj. I myself have watched the crowd of peasants carrying flowers to her vault and making adoration. These poor folk recognise a dwelling such as their own goddesses might inhabit. Its soft and sensuous lines express that ideal which rests latent in their hearts.

I could rave by the hour of these glorious works, but they lie far from Lahore and its armoury. In the Sikh capital are no such wonders of the world. What palace buildings remain there are comparatively simple in taste. The summer-house, truly, a delicious vision in white marble, silver, and glass, would not be out of place at Delhi. But the Durbar Hall is more sober. The martial ruler of the Sikhs did not expend his substance in *pietra dura* at four shillings the inch. He had things handsome about him, not extravagant. Paint and stucco, gilding and silver, reproduced, near enough, the same effects which the Moghul sovereigns gained by costly marbles and intolerable expense. Such as the palace is, cheap by comparison, no monarch in the world has a dwelling more delightful.

When the floor was strewed with Persian carpets, and the superb hangings were rolled back upon their pillars; when the open sunny hall was filled with chiefs and counsellors in gayest silks, reflected by a thousand bits of mirror in the painted ceiling and the silver walls; when the Sikh chivalry paraded in the court beneath their monarch's eye—those who witnessed that scene beheld the last grand show of martial pomp as it used to be, the last grand spectacle of old-world magnificence. There are rajahs yet in India—too many—who keep their ragamuffin armies and clothe themselves in jewels as in mail; but the spirit of the thing has gone, the glory has departed. Their regiments are maintained, not for fight, but for show, and all know it. Gorgeous are their durbars, but the reproving eye of the "Resident Sah'b," like the trail of the serpent, is over them all, checking their too lively moods, baulking their displays of royal will and temper, rebuking, or, if need be, forbidding their pretty pastimes. Lahore is still delightful, with its busy crowds draped in every hue under the sky, its beautiful women and majestic men; but, as the Roman peasants sang to Byron, "*Non e piu come era primo.*"

It consoles the curious mind to notice that Runjeet Singh grew weary of his state. Outside the palace, up rickety steps, they show the study where he loved to sit with little Dhuleep, now a county magnate in England. Six people could not stand in the tiny room, which is plain almost as a barrack lodging. The walls, of polished plaster, are daubed with roses, and lilies, and daffydown-dillies, in the style of those pictures at the gate. Conspicuous on a pilaster, a mere "bogus" thing, are the portraits of Punjab Lim, his favourite son, who died, and young Dhuleep. Horribly bad they are as works of art, and equally bad as portraits. The warrior monarch is identified by his snowy beard, and his one eye; but there is scarcely an effort to give individuality. Dhuleep is represented as a chubby boy, with eyes as large as saucers, and lashes curling into the distance. But it is recorded that the artist more than satisfied his employer. Runjeet sat for hours every day, the loving child upon his lap, regarding with complaisance his absurd caricature. He was thinking doubtless of the future, how to provide for the safety of his heir amidst a factious nobility, how to ensure the continuance

of that friendship with the English which he had eagerly embraced and loyally sustained. In prophetic moods he knew the endeavour hopeless, but his sagacity could never have foreseen a particle of the truth. Runjeet would have smiled without anger at the maniac who announced that his son would be an English landlord, employing his spare time in the composition of an opera.

A collection of weapons most curious and interesting is that in the armoury of Lahore. An artist's eye observes with pleasure the strange shapes, the fantastic but tasteful ornament; and the mechanic also finds matter for his notice. The efforts of native craftsmen to imitate European arms are curious in themselves, and creditable to the ingenuity of the makers. Lots of odd things are pointed out: a revolving-carbine, which, it might be thought, would need two men to carry it and one to make it revolve; chain-shot of extraordinary combinations; fac-similes of English breast-plates, as if the Sikh were not handsomer and better; thumbscrews; complicated lances; odd flags and standards; swords of endless variety and shape; wall-pieces, matchlocks, fire-arms of every sort and kind, with machinery undreamt of in Europe since mediæval times; the famous wagnakh, wherewith Sivaji murdered Afzul Khan, which might be described as an Indian form of knuckleduster—an instrument carried in the hand and furnished with three tremendous claws of steel, with which a man disembowels his enemy while embracing him; daggers of eccentric fashion, &c. But the most interesting display is that of armour: helmets, breast, back, and side pieces, gauntlets, and shields. All of these are artistic of decoration as admirable in design and material. The greater part are inlaid with gold, like the helmet I have described, some more, some less; but I did not see many to surpass my own. The friend with me, who knew the secret, maliciously observed to an intelligent soldier who ciceroned us: "You have a good many valuables here, and no great precautions against robbery. Is nothing ever lost?"

"Why, sir," replied the man, "they did use to think that the armoury would be safe without a guard at all. There's thieves amongst the Sikhs, though not a many; but they told our officers, the gooroos did, that the worst budmash in town would starve before he'd steal old Runjeet's things. And we ain't a big garrison in the citadel now,

and duty comes a little bit heavy sometimes. So, in the last sickly season, our officers took off the sentries, thinking that them as mounts guard over the palace opposite could keep an eye upon the armoury; and the first dark night, what happens? Why, some budmashes comes in and pukarows a coolie-load of all the beautifullest things in the shop! It was hard on me, for I was corporal of the guard that night; but our C. O., he's a gentleman; for he doesn't say nothing much, but comes out as soon as it gets dark, and stands where our chaps had been doing sentry-go, and he sees for himself that we couldn't have spotted them thieves not if there'd been a regiment of them, unless they marched with bands playing, which they weren't likely to do, were they? So it passed over, but the things have never been recovered. All the same, I should like to catch one of them chaps as did it. I'd let him sabey what it is to be in a funk, as we was. I would that!"

Though I didn't take the helmet, I felt guilty. Is it my duty to return the thing? Anyone who has time to resolve a case of conscience may address me under care of the Editor. I am too busy for such enquiries myself.

### AN OLD STORY RETOLD.

RENWICK WILLIAMS, THE MONSTER.

THIS is the history of a social scare nearly a hundred years old, and now forgotten, save by the few who have an opportunity of seeing Gilray's and other satirical prints of the period; and even they have a very vague idea of it, for very few would take the trouble to hunt up the contemporaneous newspapers, and so learn the true version of what was a very real and present danger to the female sex of that day, although it is only represented in the aforesaid drawings in a laughable and caricature sense.

In the early spring of 1790 murmurs began to be heard of ladies being attacked and stabbed by a monster in human form. The murmurs were low at first, and "monster" was printed with a small "m"; but very shortly they grew into a roar, and no capitals were found too large for THE MONSTER.

Indeed, even before that, and as far back as May, 1788, a Mrs. Smith had been stabbed in the upper part of her thigh by a man in Fleet Street, and was even followed by him to a house in Johnson's

Court, to which she was going, and watched by him until she was let in. In May, 1789, a Mrs. Godfrey was similarly stabbed in Boswell Court, Fleet Street; and another lady was left wounded at her door. In March, 1790, a Mrs. Blaney, of Bury Street, was stabbed at her door after she had knocked. Dr. Smith, seeing an account of this outrage in a newspaper, inserted a notice in the *Morning Herald*, and that journal having made some severe remarks on the matter, public opinion began to be awakened, and numerous letters were written on the subject to the newspapers of the day. The thing began to be talked of in the higher circles. A young lady named Porter had been stabbed whilst, in the company of her sisters, returning from the Drawing Room at St. James's on the 18th of January, the Queen's Birthday; and since that time several people had been wounded by this miscreant, who, fortunately, always failed in doing serious injury to his victims.

Mr. John Julius Angerstein (whose name will ever be associated with the commencement of our National Gallery) was very active, and inaugurated a subscription at Lloyd's, to which the guineas flowed merrily, for the purpose of offering a reward for the capture and conviction of "the Monster." The police began to bestir themselves, and they, too, issued placards. One will serve as a type of all:

"Public Office, Bow Street.

"Thursday, 29th April, 1790.

**"ONE HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD.**

"Several ladies having of late been inhumanly cut and maimed by a person answering the following description, whoever will apprehend him or give such information to Sir Sampson Wright at the above office as may be the means of his being apprehended, shall, immediately upon his committal to prison, receive fifty pounds from Mr. Angerstein of Pall Mall, and the further sum of fifty pounds upon his conviction.

"N.B.—He appears to be about thirty years of age, of a middle size, rather thin made, a little pock-marked, of a pale complexion, large nose; light-brown hair, tied in a queue, cut short and frizzed low at the sides; is sometimes dressed in black, and sometimes in a shabby blue coat; sometimes wears straw-coloured breeches, with half boots, laced up before; sometimes wears a cocked hat, and at other times a round hat, with a very high top, and generally carries a Wangee cane in his hand.

"*Ed.* All servants are recommended to take notice that if any man has stayed at home without apparent cause, within these few days, during the daylight. All washerwomen and servants should take notice of any blood on a man's handkerchief or linen, as the wretch generally fetches blood when he strikes. All servants should examine if any man carries sharp weapons about him, and if there is any blood thereon, particularly tucks; and maid-servants are to be told that a tuck is generally at the head of a stick, which comes out by a sudden jerk. All cutlers are desired to watch if any man answering the above description is desirous of having his weapon of attack very sharp."

All baker's men were asked to give notice at every house they called at of the above reward, and Mr. Angerstein promised twenty pounds to any man by whose instrumentality the Monster was discovered.

Additional publicity was, moreover, given by other means. The *Morning Herald* of April 27 says: "A new musical piece was produced last night at Astley's called *The Monster*, and being brought forward at a time when the attention of all London was engaged in discovering him, cannot fail of producing full houses. Astley seems to have taken up the matter very seriously, as the piece abounds with much satire against the Monster. The songs also are well adapted; the chorus of one concluding as follows:

"When the Monster is taken in the fact,  
We'll have him tried by the Coventry Act,\*  
The Black Act,  
The Coventry Act,

produced unbounded applause. This piece will certainly be a good acquisition to Astley, who is said to be the author."

One lady (Mrs. R. Walpole) was fortunate enough to escape being wounded, owing to her having an apple in her pocket; an incident which gave rise to some poetic effusions:

Eve for an apple lost immortal life:  
From you an apple turn'd the Monster's knife!  
Can greater proof, since Eve, be given  
Of diabolic strife,  
Or interposing Heaven?

The apple was in days of yore  
An agent to the Devil,  
When Eve was tempted to explore  
The sense of good and evil.  
But present chronicles can give  
An instance quite uncommon,  
How that which ruined Mother Eve  
Hath saved a Modern Woman.

The Monster was even made a party to anti-slavery agitation, for at the Westminster Forum in Panton Street, Haymarket, "by desire of several ladies," was debated the question: "Which is the greater disgrace to humanity, the ruffian who drags the female African from her family, her

\* This Act against cutting and maiming owed its name to Sir John Coventry, who in Charles the Second's time was favourable to a motion in the House of Commons to impose a tax on play-houses, which was opposed by the Court. Sir John Birkenhead having remarked that the players were the king's servants, and a part of his pleasure, Sir J. Coventry asked "Whether the king's pleasure lie among the men or the women that acted?" This was neither forgotten nor forgiven, and Sir John was set upon whilst walking home by some ruffians. He defended himself desperately, and wounded some of his assailants, but was overpowered, and his nose slit to the bone "for reflecting on the king." This outrage excited great indignation at the time.



kindred, and her native country, or the Monster who has lately wounded or terrified many ladies in this metropolis?" The result of this discussion is not handed down to posterity.

Still the Monster kept steadily at his work, and almost every day brought its tale of some woman being stabbed; and one being injured in St. Pancras Parish, a meeting of the inhabitants was called at the Percy Coffee House on May 7th, and an association was formed "to nightly patrol the streets of the south division of Saint Pancras from half an hour before sunset till eleven at night, for the public safety, and especially to guard that sex which a Monster or Monsters, in opposition to the dictates of nature and humanity, have dared to assault and wound with wanton and savage cruelty," &c.

The idea that these outrages were not done single-handed was on the increase, and the indefatigable Mr. Angerstein again issued a placard and "informs the public, that from information he has received of the person who, since Friday last, has assaulted and wounded several women, there is great reason to fear that more than one of these wretches infests the streets; it is therefore thought necessary to give the following description of one, who, within this week, has committed many acts of cruelty upon women;" and gives four descriptions of the man's dress, which would lead to the inference that the Monster was in possession of a very extensive wardrobe.

People were now gradually getting into a state of ferment, and the Monster was the engrossing topic of public interest. Of course, then as now, the wrong people were arrested occasionally. One, "Walter Hill, was brought before the Magistrate at Litchfield Street on suspicion of being one of the wretches who have cut several women; he was apprehended in Windmill Street, Tottenham Court Road, near the place where two women were cut, though Miss Porter and several other ladies declared the prisoner was not the person who wounded them." Nothing could be proved against him, and ultimately he was discharged.

Even the light-fingered fraternity entered into the spirit of the times, for The World of May 11th has "Public Office, Bow Street, before Sir Sampson Wright. Yesterday evening, about half after seven o'clock, a gentleman of family and fortune was surrounded in Holborn by a number of pickpockets, who after hustling him

and robbing him of his watch, money, and hat, called out: 'That is the Monster, he has just cut a woman.' A vast number of people immediately pursued the gentleman, some calling, 'The Monster!' others, 'Stop thief,' till at length he was knocked down and surrounded by near a thousand people, by whom he was very ill-treated, and probably would not have escaped with life, had he not been, by some gentleman, taken into Gray's Inn Coffee House; from whence he was conveyed to the Brown Bear in Bow Street in a hackney-coach; where the mob were so exasperated that they broke the windows of the house, and, could they have got at him, would no doubt have massacred him; by stratagem he was at nine o'clock brought to this office. When the above facts appeared, Sir Sampson Wright lamented that it was not in his power to punish the perpetrators of this daring and alarming assault, but did all he could, by giving that gentleman his protection until the mob dispersed."

Accounts of mock assaults were written to the papers—one of them extremely circumstantial, telling how a courageous lady drew a pistol "from her pocket and discharged it into the wretch's neck, immediately under the ear, who instantly left her, uttering the most dreadful imprecations." This, it is needless to say, was denied and exposed next morning.

Imposture of course took advantage of such a golden opportunity, and we find that "the account which appeared in all the newspapers of Miss B. of Marylebone Street having been twice wounded by the Monster, proves to be a fabrication, for the purpose of exciting compassion and money, and has, in some degree, answered the purpose. The above discovery has been made, by an investigation of this business, by the Select Vestry of Marylebone Parish. This is a new kind of Monster!"

The Oracle of May 17 tells the following little story: "Tuesday, about nine o'clock, as Mr. Heather was crossing Tower Hill, he observed a well-dressed woman upon the ground; when he went to her, she said a very tall man had just wounded her with some sharp instrument, and begged his assistance to get her to the Minorities to a coach, which he readily complied with, upon observing blood in several places on her gown and apron. However, the coach had not been gone ten minutes before he found she had picked his pocket of his watch and about three guineas."

Although there was now a cessation of real attacks by the Monster, the public feeling rose to very fever height. As one newspaper remarked: "The Monster is now a mischief of more than common magnitude. Inhuman himself, the villainy is visited upon all who are of the same sex; alike the source of apprehension, terror, and flight. It is really distressing to walk our streets towards evening. Every woman we meet regards us with distrust, shrinks sidling from our touch, and expects a poignard to pierce what gallantry and manhood consider as sacred. There must be a very criminal supineness somewhere, or these execrable villains would with greater speed expiate with their lives the insulted humanity of being."

As an example of the pitch to which the excitement was wrought, the following case may be taken. A man met a girl, and went with her into a public-house. They sat down, and he showed her an artificial bouquet, or nosegay, as it was then called, which he had in his hand, and begged her to accept it. The girl, in taking hold of it, felt something prick her, and it made her hand bleed. She went away, and told the story to some of her friends, who immediately insisted that it must be the Monster, and that a dagger was certainly concealed in the nosegay. The man was in consequence arrested, and kept all night in the watch-house. On enquiry in the morning, it was found that the girl's hand had only been pricked by the wire used to bind the flowers together, and the poor man was, of course, discharged.

But Nemesis was at hand. One of his victims—that Miss Porter who was stabbed after the Drawing Room on the Queen's birthday—was walking with Mr. John Coleman in St. James's Park, on Sunday, June 13th, and the Monster passed her. She at once recognised him, and, her agitation being remarked by Mr. Coleman, she said, "There is the wretch who wounded me." Mr. Coleman left her in charge of her friends and followed the man, who walked very fast—evidently feeling he had been noticed—and endeavoured to dodge about from Spring Gardens to Admiralty Passage, back again to Spring Gardens and up Cockspur Street to Pall Mall; thence to St. James's Street and Bolton Street, where he knocked at the door of a house and was let in. He stayed there about five minutes, and then went to Piccadilly and St. James's Street, where he knocked at another house and asked the servant

some question. Leaving there, he went to Bond Street, Mr. Coleman endeavouring to insult him by walking before and behind him and staring him in the face. He then went to Oxford Street—then called Oxford Road—and Vere Street, where he knocked at an empty house. Then Mr. Coleman spoke to him, and asked him what was the use of knocking so violently at a house palpably empty; and he replied that he knew the people of the house, named Pearce, and knocked again for three or four minutes. He then crossed to South Molton Street, knocked at a house, and was admitted. Mr. Coleman asked the master of the house, Mr. Smith, for information as to the man, but he refused to give any unless some reason was assigned. Mr. Coleman replied that the other had insulted some ladies under his protection, and that he demanded satisfaction. The Monster offered to meet him at any coffee-house, and gave his address as Fifty-two, Jermyn Street. Mr. Coleman then let him go, but upon second thoughts hurried back, and again met him in St. James's Street; and looking at him, told him he did not think he was what he described himself, and asked him to come with him to Mr. Porter's house, which was not far off. He consented, and on seeing him two of the Miss Porters immediately fainted, but upon recovery unhesitatingly declared him to be "the wretch." He turned to Mr. Coleman and asked: "Do the ladies suspect me to be the person advertised? Am I suspected?"

He was given into custody, and on the 15th of June the newspapers gave full accounts of his capture and examination.

He proved to be a native of Wales, named Renwick (or Rhynwick) Williams, aged about twenty-three, who was sent young to London, where he was bound apprentice to Sir John Gallini, with a view to his becoming a dancer on the stage. A misunderstanding as to the disappearance of a watch severed this connection, and he then led a very loose life. For some little time, about two months, he was a lawyer's clerk, but this employment being only temporary, he was reduced to difficulties until he met with Mr. Aimable Michell, of Dover Street, who taught him artificial-flower making, and with whom he remained until his arrest. He was dressed very respectably in a blue coat lined and edged with buff, buff waistcoat, and black satin breeches.

He was fully identified by the Misses Porter, Miss Frost, Miss Baughan, and Mrs.

Franklin, whilst numerous ladies who had been wounded could not identify him. He was of course remanded. Royalty, in the person of the Duke of Cumberland (afterwards King of Hanover), was present at his examination, and great difficulty was experienced in preserving the prisoner from the fury of the exasperated mob.

On the 16th of June he was again brought up, was identified by two more ladies, and confronted with others who could not be sure he was the man who had wounded them. The Dukes of York and Cumberland, and Prince William of Gloucester, besides several peers, were present.

He was brought before the magistrates once more, when another lady identified him, and he was committed for trial.

Owing to the novelty of the crime, great difficulty was experienced as to his indictment, but it was at last settled that he should be tried under the statute 6th Geo. I., c. 23, s. 11, which made it felony punishable with transportation for seven years to assault any person in the public streets, with intent to tear, spoil, cut, burn, or deface the garments or clothes of such person or persons, provided the act be done in pursuance of such intention.

On Thursday, the 8th of July, Williams was tried at the Old Bailey before Mr. Justice Buller, charged with making an assault upon Ann Frost, spinster, on the 9th of November last in Jermyn Street, St. James's, and wickedly, wilfully, and maliciously tearing and spoiling her garments, to wit, the gown, petticoats, and shift of said Ann, against the statute in that case provided.

He was also indicted for the commission of a similar offence in Holborn, on the 5th of May, on Sarah, the wife of John Davis. The same on Sarah, the wife of John Godfrey, on the 13th of May in St. Marylebone. The 26th of September on Mary Forster in Maxwell Street. The 6th of December on Elizabeth Baughan in Parliament Street. For a like act on the same day in the same street on Frances Baughan. For a like act on Ann Porter on the 18th of January in St. James's Street.

He pleaded not guilty, and was defended by counsel.

The case of Miss Porter was then gone into, and the evidence, as already detailed, was adduced. For the defence he called his master, Mr. Michell, who swore that he was at work till twelve on the night of the 18th of January, and did not quit his house

till after supper at half-past twelve, which was also substantiated by the witness of his sister, Miss Michell, Catherine and Molly Harmond, and two of the workwomen, besides a customer; and ten witnesses were called as to character. The judge summed up very favourably for the prisoner, but the jury without hesitation found him guilty. The judge said, as this was a new case, and he had some doubts as to the indictment, he would respite judgment until he had laid the case before the twelve judges. So this and the other indictments were put off until the December Sessions.

There were many accounts of the trial, and numerous portraits were published of Williams, who was by no means bad-looking, thin and pale, with powdered hair "en queue." One highly sensational coloured engraving represents his attack on Miss Porter, who (with her sister and another lady) is depicted in Court dress, with feathers, train, and much befrizzed and powdered hair. There were printed and pictorial squibs, mostly in the coarse humour of the times, and the usual newspaper correspondence wrangle, in which, of course, it was unpopular to advance any argument in favour of the Monster. Indeed, the *World* of October 16th says: "Writing a defence of the Monster carries with it more serious consequences than people are at first aware of, because it would appear as if publishing accounts, in newspapers or otherwise, could really justify atrocious acts. As Junius has said: 'The people at large are never mistaken in their sentiments, and if they have formed an opinion, there is no talking them out of it by misrepresentation.'" That there was an opinion in his favour is not only evidenced by this, but at the City Debates, Capel Court, Bartholomew Lane, the question was debated on July 12: "Did the late extraordinary conduct ascribed to Renwick Williams (commonly called the Monster) originate in an unfortunate insanity, a diabolical inclination to injure the fair part of the creation, or the groundless apprehension of some mistaken females?"

But the man kept up the feeling against him by his own conduct, and could not be quiet in prison. The *Oracle* of August the 20th has the following account of "The Monster's Ball." "The depravity of the times was manifested last week in an eminent degree in Newgate. The



Monster sent cards of invitation to about twenty couple, among whom were some of his alibi friends, his brother, sisters, several of the prisoners, and others whom we shall take a future opportunity to notice.

"At four o'clock the party sat to tea; this being over, two violins struck up, accompanied by a flute, and the company proceeded to exercise their limbs. In the merry dance, the cuts and entrechats of the Monster were much admired, and his adroitness in that amusement must be interesting, from the school in which he acquired this branch of his accomplishments.

"About eight o'clock the company partook of a cold supper, and a variety of wines, such as would not discredit the most sumptuous gala, and about nine o'clock departed, that being the usual hour for locking the doors of the prison."

Williams gradually faded away from public notice until early in November, when eleven of the judges met at Serjeants' Inn Hall and consulted on his case, which had been reserved. The questions were: First, whether his having an intention to cut the person of Miss Porter, and in carrying that intention into execution, cutting the garments of that lady, is an offence within the statute of 6th Geo. I., c. 23, s. 11, on which he was convicted; the jury having, in their verdict, found that in cutting her person he had thereby an intention to cut her garments? Secondly, whether the statute being in the conjunctive, "that if any person shall assault another with an intent to cut the garment of such person, then the offender shall be guilty of felony," and the indictment in stating the intention not having connected it with the act by inserting the words that he "then and there" did cut her garment, could be supported in point of form?

Nine out of the eleven judges were of opinion that the offence, notwithstanding the finding of the jury, was not within the statute, and that the indictment was bad in point of law.

This decision reduced the monster's crime to a misdemeanour.

On Monday, December 13th, he was brought to trial at the Sessions House, Clerkenwell Green, and, as a proof of the interest it created, even the names of the jury are recorded. The trial began at ten a.m., and was inaugurated by the prisoner reading a paper declaring his innocence. He was indicted for assaulting Miss Porter with intent to kill and murder her: there

was a second count which stated that he, "holding a knife in his right hand, did wilfully give the said Ann Porter a dreadful wound, of great length and depth on the right thigh and hip; to wit, of the length of nine inches and the depth of four." A third count charged him with a common assault. The evidence was similar to that in the former trial, and, after a trial lasting thirteen hours, he was found guilty.

He was afterwards found guilty of other assaults and was finally sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Newgate for each assault on Miss Porter, Elizabeth Davis, and Miss E. Baughan, and at the end of the six years he was to find bail for good behaviour for seven years, himself in the sum of two hundred pounds and two sureties in one hundred pounds each.

What finally became of him is not known.

Mr. Angerstein offered the reward to Miss Porter, as it was by her instrumentality that the Monster was captured, but she refused it.

### THE HERALDRY OF TRADERS' SYMBOLS.

PAST volumes of ALL THE YEAR ROUND contain occasional notices of the symbolism adopted in many ways by persons engaged in trade or manufacture. The symbols are as curious in their diversity as in their details; sometimes what is called a trade-mark, to identify a manufacturer or dealer by identifying his wares; sometimes a tradesman's token, a cheap coin in use at times when real copper coins were scarce, and stamped with the name and address of an individual trader; sometimes a sign identifying a particular establishment; sometimes a signboard, generally gay with coloured devices. One matter—the connection between heraldry and some of these kinds of symbolism—is historically interesting and deserves fuller notice. Heraldry and shopkeeping certainly appear at first thought incongruous, and unfitted for anything like a close alliance; but turning our glance back to bygone ages we recognise the intelligibility of such a connection or association.

In the days when streets were not distinguished by particular names, nor the houses by a series of numbers, the inhabitants were unavoidably driven to the adoption of some other mode of denoting their places of residence or of business. Streets, it is true—except in somewhat primitive

country districts—were designated by names centuries ago. But even these street names were only a partial help. Many mercers, for example, dwelt in Cheapside; how were they to be distinguished one from another when the houses bore no distinguishing numbers? As a resource each mercer adopted some sign or symbol, such as the Golden Fleece or the Bee Hive. There are provincial towns in which particular surnames much prevail, and in which none of the houses are numbered; and the perplexity thence arising is considerable. Supposing (as we may not unreasonably do) that there are many Smiths in a long street of unnumbered houses; how can they be identified one from another, and ludicrous or awkward consequences be avoided? There is a pleasant watering-place on the sea-coast of Wales, which, a few years ago, had on its Marine Parade quite a long list of lodging-house keepers all rejoicing in the designation Mrs. Jones, in most cases Mary Jones. How did people know which was the real lady, and how did the postman's knock avoid coming to the wrong house?

At this point we get a glimpse of heraldry coming to the rescue, especially in regard to taverns and hostelries. Our old English nobility adopted signs, symbols, emblems, mottoes of some kind or other, to distinguish one noble family from another; and there is reason to believe that many inns and shops owed their designation to this source. If we look at the signs near the domains of the more distinguished county families, we recognise the armorial bearings of the Cecils, Percies, Howards, Cavendishes, Grosvenors, Herberts, Stanleys, Russells, Somersets, Seymours, Fitzroys, Churchills, Pelhams, Chandos, Gowers, Talbots, Dudleys, or other great houses. Even royalty had its signs, its trade-marks, so to speak. Thus the House of York adopted as its symbol the white rose, and the House of Lancaster the red; Richard the Second selected the white hart; Edward the Third the white swan; Richard the Third the blue boar; Edward the Fourth the three swans; Henry the Fifth the swan and antelope; Henry the Seventh the red dragon. All these symbols, which are associated with interesting episodes in the lives of the respective sovereigns, are to be met with among tavern signs. The lion was a notable animal in its frequent use, with the varying amplification into black lion, white lion, golden lion, lion

rampant; and, as we know, some of the hostelries do not fail to reveal the origin of these signs in the old mediæval times. The banner of the baron or the knight was to him the sign-board or sign-flag of his family, and heraldry is sedulous to preserve emblazonments of these symbols.

Gradually the use extended, though its origin was little thought of. In the days of Addison and Steele shopkeepers did not shrink from an incongruity in signs which is now confined strictly to taverners. "Our streets," said *The Spectator*, "are filled with Blue Boars, Black Swans, and Red Lions, not to mention Flying Pigs and Frogs in Armour, with many other creatures more extraordinary than any in the deserts of Africa." Good-humoured banter was brought into requisition by the essayist. "The Fox and Goose may be supposed to have met, but what have the Fox and Seven Stars to do together? And when did the Lamb and Dolphin ever meet, except on a sign-post? As for the Cat and Fiddle, there is a conceit in it, and therefore I do not intend that anything I have said should affect it." Possibly in the last-named instance Addison had in his thoughts the supposed derivation of Cat and Fiddle from the French *Caton Fidèle*, "the faithful cat." "I can give a shrewd guess at the humour of the inhabitant by the sign that he hangs before his door. A surly, choleric fellow generally makes choice of a Bear, while men of milder disposition frequently live at the Lamb." The essayist whimsically suggested that a public officer should be appointed to regulate all these matters. "For want of such an officer there is nothing like sound literature or good sense to be met with in those objects, which are everywhere thrusting themselves out to the eye, and endeavouring to become visible. My first task, therefore, should be, like Hercules, to clear the City from monsters. In the second place, I would forbid that creatures of jarring and incongruous natures should be joined together in the same sign—such as the Bell and Neat's Tongue, the Dog and Gridiron. I would enjoin every shopkeeper to make use of a sign which bears some affinity to the wares in which he deals. What can be more inconsistent than to see a tailor at the sign of the Lion! A cook should not live at the Boot, nor a shoemaker at the Roasted Pig; and yet, for want of this regulation, I have seen a Goat set up before the door of a perfumer,

and the French King's Head at a sword-cutler's."

That many of these signs taken singly cannot be directly traced to any heraldic source is probable enough; they originated in some trifling incident the memory of which has passed away. But in the instances where two objects, whether animals or not, are combined in one sign despite their incongruity, we must search for motives in some other direction. Addison threw out an ingenious suggestion on this point. A young tradesman was accustomed on his first start in business to add to his sign, whatever it may have been, that of the master to whom he had been apprenticed, or whom he had served as a workman, in the same way that a husband after marriage gives a place to his wife's armorial bearings in or with his own. The essayist cites the ridiculous combination of Three Nuns and Hare as probably traceable to this origin. Another cause of the duplication of signs is that a taverner, let us say, on moving from one house to another, combines the signs of both, in the hope of catching two sets of customers. The Angel and Cucumber, the Cow and Snuffers, the George and Guy, the Sun and Thirteen Cantons, the Salutation and Cat, the Apple Tree and Misers, the Crow and Horseshoe, the Sun and Whalebone, were very likely originated in one or other of these two ways.

Dr. Hawkeworth remarked that many signs betoken the religion prevalent among us before the days of the Reformation. The Angels, Crosses, Holy Lambs, are cases in point; and so is St. Dunstan, with his tongs ready to tweak the nose of the Evil One.

The excessive employment of gold-leaf or of japan gold in the adornment of signs in the last century, drew forth strictures from the essayist. Gilt fruits, flowers, leaves, and trees; gilt knives, axes, scissors, saws, and swords; gilt fish, legs, periwigs, and leather bottles; gilt cheeses, sugar-loaves, half-moons, are among the absurdities of this class.

Many tavern signs exhibit touches of quaint satire. The Quiet Woman and the Silent Woman, with pictures of a headless woman; the Honest Lawyer, with his head under his arm; the Load of Mischief and the Man laden with Mischief, each depicting a man chained to a woman, with the word "wedlock" on the padlock of the chain. The Green Man and Still has long been a puzzle: sometimes a man dressed in a sort of Robin Hood green garb, but leaving the still un-

explained. A French writer, wishing to enable other Frenchmen to understand this sign, translated it into "*L'homme est vert et tranquille.*" Other attempts to explain it have not met with much success. One of the World's End taverns bears a pictorial representation of a horseman in the equestrian costume of George the Second brought to a dead stop by a precipice, all beyond being a chaos of sky and cloud.

Many tavern signs are believed to be traceable to the conception of names which originally had widely different meanings, such as Boulogne Mouth into Bull and Mouth, Boulogne Gate into Bull and Gate, Cœur Doré ("*Golden Heart*") into Queer Door, Bacchanals into Bag o' Nails, Peg and Wassail (connected with an old wassail-bowl custom) into Pig and Whistle, George Canning into George and Cannon, and perhaps the most extraordinary of all, God Encompasseth Us into Goat and Compasses. Gaming-houses in the last two centuries occasionally exhibited signs denoting the kind of play mostly carried on there. In one case the owner (a Frenchman) adopted the French names for some of the suits at cards; his successor in the same house, an Englishman, not understanding the names employed, transformed them into Pig and Carrots and Pig and Checquers. The Swan with Two Necks, having its origin in two nicks or marks cut on the beak or mandible of swans, as a means of identifying the birds belonging to different owners, became the symbol or sign of the Vintner's Company, and is now adopted as an inn and tavern sign.

Many signs are probably mere whimsies of the inventors, or depended on some trifling local or temporary incident no longer traceable. Witness the Stewponey, the Case is Altered, the Bombay Grab, the Essex Serpent, the Moonrakers, the Bird and Baby (possibly a new version of Eagle and Child), the Loggerheads, the Letter A, the Two Spies, the Widow's Son, the Struggling Man, the Old Centurion, the Title Deed, Peter's Finger, Hark the Lasher, Soldier Dick, Q in the Corner, Blackbones.

The hanging-out of sign-boards was not only permitted for centuries in the metropolis, but was made by enactment almost compulsory in the time of Charles the First. Many of the signs, on the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire, were engraved or embossed on the brick fronts of houses. They were in most instances the imitation of devices marked on the houses on the same sites



before the fire. Frequently these engraved signs were ludicrously inconsistent with the trade carried on in the rebuilt house. Swinging painted sign-boards were much more prevalent, however, than inscriptions cut in brick fronts; and troublesome, albeit in some respects picturesque, they gradually became. The main thoroughfares were almost barricaded by continuous rows of them. They were in danger of falling through neglect; they interfered with light and ventilation; and they made a disagreeable creaking noise when swayed by the wind, disturbing the nightly slumbers of the good citizens and their families. Cits slept in the City in those days, and knew little about private residences in the suburbs or out among the greenery. One by one, enactments and regulations gradually brought this nuisance within bearable limits.

A satirical exhibition of sign-boards was got up by Bonnel Thornton, a witty character of the Georgian era. It purported to comprise specimens of the sign-painter's art at a time when great changes were being introduced. It was in reality a satirical hit at the politics and politicians of the day. The exhibition was held at Bonnel Thornton's residence in Bow Street, Covent Garden; and the purchaser of a shilling catalogue was the fee for admission. Painted sign-boards were nailed around the room, varied with pendent models of keys, bells, swords, sugar-loaves, candles, tobacco-rolls, and such other articles as were frequently hung out as emblems or symbols of trades. When examined, and especially when compared with the descriptions in the catalogue, the sarcastic character of the whole affair became at once evident.

The old days of sign-boards, except heraldic and other signs for hostelrys, have pretty well passed away. Their glory is departed; and shopkeepers in most trades discard them. The exception above named is a remarkable one. Every-one of the seven or eight thousand inns, taverns, and public-houses in the vast metropolis has its sign. No wonder that, under the stimulus of imitation, and the difficulty of hitting upon new names, many among them are repeated over and over again: King's Arms and King's Heads, Crowns and Sceptres, Hopes and Anchors, White Bears, White Horses, White Harts, White Lions, White Swans—who can count them? The numbering of houses—first begun, it is said, in Burlington Street and Lincoln's Inn Fields—has gradually

cleared some streets of nearly all sign-boards.

For those readers who wish to dip more deeply into this curious subject, an inexhaustible store of information will be found in the volume prepared by Mr. Larwood and the late Mr. John Camden Hotten, including a rich budget of anecdote relating to old inns and coffee-houses. In relation to our more immediate subject—the adoption as signs of the banners and armorial bearings used by barons, knights, and great families as distinguishing marks—much may be found in Mr. Bowtell's volume on heraldry. There has lately passed away a veteran who was versed in every part of this interesting topic; namely, Mr. J. R. Planché, best known to society generally for his dramatic productions, extending over the almost inconceivably long period of sixty-two years. As Somerset Herald at the College of Arms or Herald's College, he had at his fingers' ends, so to speak, every kind of detail relating to heraldry. It was this accomplishment that enabled him to render such valuable aid to Mr. Charles Kemble, and afterwards to Mr. Charles Kean, in imparting historical accuracy to the costumes, armour, and chivalric trappings of mediæval times in stage revivals. It was the same accomplishment that fitted him to write the best *History of Costume* ever produced; and, if he had had time to do it, a detailed history of the connection between heraldry and signs would have received ample justice at the hands of this fine old man of eighty-four.

## VISITED ON THE CHILDREN.

BY THEO GIFT.

### BOOK II.

#### CHAPTER III. "IT IS THE LITTLE RIFT WITHIN THE LUTE."

JENNY had finished her dance, and was seated by Mrs. Chawler in a dutiful attitude which disguised some inward restlessness, when Lion came up from behind and touched her on the shoulder.

"Where is Sybil?" he said, and the girl turned round with a start, for there was something in his voice which seemed to strike a responsive chord in her own heart, and ring there as with a loud note of fear and apprehension. The eagerness of her answer had an apologetic tone in it.

"I don't quite know; somewhere in the garden, I think. It is so warm, you know, in here, and a great many people have

gone out besides. See there." And she pointed towards a corner of the terrace, where a big stand of dark red azaleas only partly concealed the gleaming folds of some feminine dress. Lion's glance followed hers. He said shortly:

"That is not Sybil."

"No; but—but it is someone else. There are lots of people in the gardens just now. That last waltz was very heating."

Poor Jenny was conscious of the extreme feebleness of the commencement of her reply, and was trying to improve on it; but Lion did not seem to hear, and his face was so pale, his eyes wore such a strange expression, that Jenny, hardly knowing the reason why, found herself speaking confusedly, and with a kind of hurried deprecation, as though Sybil were somehow to blame, and she would fain excuse her.

"I was very nearly crushed in it myself," she said, laughing. "Look at my poor flowers!" but Lion did not look, and there was no smile on his face as he answered:

"Your sister did not suffer from it at any rate, seeing that she was out of the room, both during it and the previous dance; and not to be found any more than she is now."

"How do you mean, Lion?"

"I mean that I looked for her. She was engaged to me for it."

"What, for one of your 'talk-waltzes'?" She must have forgotten it then," said Jenny quickly. "How vexed she will be; but everyone forgets sometimes. I do, I know. When one's card is full, one gets confused; and Sybil's card is always full. You must make allowance for her popularity," she added, looking up with a smile, which faded before the keen look which Lion's eyes sent down into hers.

"Her popularity cannot have been very confusing this evening," he said dryly, "for I do not think she has danced half-a-dozen times, and three of those I know have been with the same person."

Jenny looked up at him, a crimson streak of colour in her cheek.

"Lion!" she said, her great eyes tremulous between entreaty and reproach.

"Surely you are not——"

"Jealous?" he interrupted bitterly. "Is that what you were going to say? No, not quite that; but—but, Jenny, people are talking of her—of Sybil. I have heard one or two to-night, laughing at her flirtation, as they call it. By Heaven, I believe

you have too," for his eyes were still on her, and her face had grown suddenly scarlet; yet she met his glance bravely.

"And if I had," she said, "I should have been above listening to them. Do not you know the worth of vulgar gossip? Why, they would soil an angel here if they spoke of her; and Sybil——"

"Sybil is no angel; only an innocent girl," said Lion gravely, "and a girl who may make a mistake, like any other, and never know of it till too late. Jenny, you were right, I am jealous; not of this Mr. Vane, or of any other man who may happen to monopolise her for an evening; not of anybody, but for her, for Sybil herself. She belongs to me. Her mother has trusted her to me. She is my affianced wife, and I should be unworthy to possess her, or call myself her lover, if I were not jealous of every word or action which could call spiteful eyes or gossiping tongues upon her. It is not sufficient to defend her when she is blamed. It is my duty to shield her from the very possibility of blame, and to stand between her innocence and those who would drag it down on her like this——" He stopped for a moment with a fierce look in his eyes, which spoke no love for Gareth Vane, and which made Jenny shrink; then added in a quieter tone, "I am going to look for her now," and moving the girl gently on one side, passed out at the French window near which she was sitting, and went striding away across the dewy lawn, and along the winding, rose-hung, perfumed walks, startling more than one couple by the sudden apparition of his tall dark figure, and face set in a white mask of hardly repressed anger and anxiety.

He was right. More than one person had been talking of Sybil that night. It had not been possible for Gareth to absorb her in the way he had done without attracting the attention of such a talkative community, even if there had been no previous gossip on the subject; and tongues, which might not have been set going had she been a disengaged young lady, open to be wooed and won like others in the assemblage, wagged with increased and righteous venom when a damsel, known to have already secured the most eligible young clergyman in the neighbourhood for her own property, had not even the grace to be content with him, but must needs appropriate into the bargain the handsomest man and best dancer in the room. More severe things were said on this evening than had been spoken before; and Lion,

passing some of the gossips and smarting already under a slight feeling of mortification at not being able to find his fiancée for the dance she had promised him, heard the venomous words, and boiled over with indignation.

It was not Sybil he blamed. She might not mean any harm, might not have a disloyal thought to him. In his intense love and loyalty to her he would not even glance at the possibility of such an idea; but what right had this man to monopolise her, and cause her to be talked about, and her fair name mocked at by those who were hardly worthy to mention it familiarly? She, too, who had been so sheltered and guarded from the rough touch of the world, that at one-and-twenty she was more like a beautiful, innocent child than a young lady of the period. By Heaven, he would not suffer it! His darling had been entrusted to his protection as well as that of Mrs. Chawler, and if the one did not avail her, the other should.

Yet, though he came prepared to exert it, I think the shock was even greater to him than to Sybil, when in the course of his search he came at last on her and Gareth in the lime-tree walk.

He did not see the kiss, the bend in the path prevented that, but he saw the close lover-like position, the sudden start apart; more than all, he saw his love's marked and unmistakable shrinking at his sight—shrinking from him as if for shelter to the other man's side; and the sight went like a knife to his heart, almost depriving him of speech and breath. For one fleeting moment, indeed, the truth flashed upon him in all its fickle, heartless cruelty; but swiftly as it came he flung it from him, and stood at Sybil's side striving to force his face and voice into their wonted pleasantness as he spoke to her.

"I was looking for you, Sybil," he said at once. "Did you forget that the last was my dance? Let me take you back to the house."

He offered her his arm as he spoke. It had not escaped him, that little gesture by which Gareth drew his closer against her hand as she pressed towards him, and the young clergyman's lips were white with the pain and wrath which he could not speak; but he managed to keep his voice in good control; and Sybil, dazed and reluctant as she looked, had no thought of disobeying. She would have taken her trembling fingers from Gareth's arm, if its tightening pressure had not held them there, and

gone with her lover at once. It was his right to summon her, his right to be angry. She had been engaged to him for the dance after Major Graham's, and of course she had broken the engagement. She seemed to have broken many and most engagements during the last ten minutes. It was all a confused dream of bliss and fear and wrong-doing; but she was awake now, and she would have obeyed and gone with him at once if she had been allowed.

Gareth, however, was in one of his most reckless moods. He was not used to suffering other men to take from him anything that he chose to keep, whether it were his own or not; and at the present moment the contemptuous ignoring of his existence by so much as a glance, combined with a certain amount of proprietorship in Lion's manner to Sybil, irritated him into sudden self-assertion. Perhaps, also—for there is a golden thread in most life-skeins, however dark and tangled they may be on the whole—the involuntary pressure of that slender little figure against his side appealed, more forcibly than any scruples of prudence could withstand, to his tenderness and chivalry. He could not give her up. That light touch of his lips on her brow seemed to have consecrated her to himself, and he kept her hand firmly in his arm as he spoke, ignoring Lion in his turn.

"Do you want to go back to the house, Miss Dysart? This next dance is mine, I believe, whatever the last was; and as it will commence almost immediately, it is hardly worth while for me to resign my care of you."

That he meant to provoke a quarrel was evident from the insolence and defiance in his manner; and Sybil, who had never seen him in this mood, was terribly frightened; while the dark flush which mounted to Lion's very temples showed that he was perfectly cognisant of his rival's intention. If he still restrained himself, it was from no thought of his "cloth," or of the scandal to his profession, but something else, which, even if these had lost their power, would still have held their influence over him—the presence of a woman, and that woman the one he loved. A man may be driven to forget he is a clergyman. He can hardly fail to remember he is a gentleman; and that remembrance stood Lion in stead now. At that moment he was in such a passion that he could have taken Gareth by the throat and throttled him, without the smallest compunction. It was the thought of Sybil which controlled



him; and the sense that it would be lowering to her if he let himself be dragged into a quarrel with another man in her presence. His voice was studiously courteous as he answered :

"I am sorry to have to take Miss Dysart away; but I only come as a messenger from her sister. It is she who wants you, Sybil. Will you let me take you to her?"

He came nearer to her as he spoke, and Sybil found it impossible to resist. Indeed, she had no desire to do so. Gareth's active antagonism had set her trembling all over; and unable to gauge Lionel's character as it deserved, she was afraid of his retaliating in kind; and felt only too acutely that she was not sufficiently guiltless to be able to act as mediatrix in a dispute between the two men.

She was not bad, poor little Sybil; only weak, and just now very frightened and unhappy. She detached her fingers from Gareth's arm and laid them on Lionel's before the former could prevent her, if indeed he had any intention of persisting in doing so, and spoke hurriedly, with a pitiful appeal in her blue eyes which made the man she was leaving, and he who owned her, equally bitter at heart.

"Is Jenny looking for me? I will go to her directly. I only came out because—because it was so hot, and I did not hear your waltz begin. I am very sorry."

Gareth turned sharply away. It was more than he could bear to hear that quiver in her voice, and know that it was an appeal to another man's indulgence, and that he had no right to resent it.

"I shall find you inside then, Miss Dysart, as soon as our dance commences. Your sister will have done with you then, I hope," he said defiantly, and went away and left them.

Poor Sybil was shivering from head to foot; and Lionel, left alone with her, let his eyes rest on her with a depth of sorrowful questioning which must have touched her, could she have met them. Through every pulse and limb he could feel the quivering in hers so near him, though the little hand which rested on his arm touched it scarcely more heavily than a roseleaf; and the sensation filled him with a pain almost too keen for speech. That she should tremble at being left with him, implied absolute fear of him, her lover, who had never opened his lips to her except in tenderness and affection. It was with an effort, which made his voice sound cold and harsh, that he addressed her.

"Is it true that you are engaged to Mr. Vane for the next dance, Sybil?"

Sybil hesitated.

"I—I hardly remember," she stammered, "but if he said so, I suppose— Indeed, Lionel, I did not mean to break my engagement to you for the last."

"Probably not," he said with a slight compression of the lips. "I never supposed you did. I am going to ask you, however, to break your present one with Mr. Vane, and not to dance with him again this evening."

"Lionel!" Her fair pale face had grown suddenly scarlet, and she made a movement to withdraw her hand from his arm; but there was no indignation in her tone—he wished there had been. There was only apprehension and appeal; and the consciousness that it was so made his tone harden.

"I do not believe for a moment that you would wilfully flirt with anyone. Apart from your caring for me, I am sure that you would not descend to such a thing; but you have danced three or four times with this gentleman already. People here have remarked on it, and spoken of you and him in a way which would have been very offensive for you to hear. I should not have mentioned it to you, but that were I not to do so, and to leave you to provoke further comments by your ignorance of those already made, I might be obliged to resent them in your behalf."

It was rather a long speech, and it sounded longer from the forced deliberateness of his utterance; but Sybil did not speak, did not flame up as he still half-hoped she would; and he spoke again, this time in a sharper tone of remonstrance, as if begging her to defend herself.

"You must feel yourself, that, for a girl who is so shortly going to become the wife of one man to dance time after time with another, and that other a person of Mr. Vane's character, and then to be found wandering about with him in solitary walks away from all the rest of the company must look—— Good Heaven!" he cried out, appalled even by the sound of his own words, "even in innocence I would never have believed it possible in you."

For the first time Sybil lifted her head proudly and her eyes lightened.

"I do not know what there is against Mr. Vane's character," she said warmly. "Where is he worse than anyone else? I have not heard anything against him; and if I had, I should not listen to mere vulgar gossip; I should be above it."

"What, you can stand up for him!" cried Lion, more deeply wounded at this exhibition of feeling for Gareth in one who had lacked spirit for any defence of herself than he had been before. "Do you care for him so much then? I think it is time I did come forward to protect you from him, a worthless roué and libertine, whose boast is to have some woman's name always bandied about in connection with his own. Gossip, indeed! If you heard his talk among men you would not need to go to gossip for his character. Perhaps, however, you think——"

But Sybil had snatched her hand from his arm, and burst into sudden tears; and her lover's mood softened on the moment.

"My dear, forgive me," he said, laying his hand on her shoulder and trying to draw her back to him. "Did I frighten you? Did I speak too bitterly? Indeed I never meant to hurt you. Didn't I say I knew you were blameless; and that it was only through your innocence that that scamp had power to compromise you, or make you talked about? Love, for pity's sake don't cry in that way, or I shall never forgive myself. Surely you know how I love and trust you," and again he would have drawn her to him under the shadow of the lime-trees, but Sybil only shrank further away, and her sobs sounded hysterical. He began to be afraid that some one might come that way and hear her distress; and it was a relief to him when after a moment or two she recovered herself, though she would not look up or let him take her hand even then; and when again he begged her to forgive him, she only answered:

"Please let us go home. I would rather go home at once, I am not well; and—and Jenny won't mind."

"That I am sure she will not," said Lion eagerly. "I will take you to her at once, and call the carriage. But, Sybil, are you really unwell, or is it only that I have upset you? My dearest, don't look away from me like that. Indeed it was for your own sake," pleaded the poor young fellow, stroking the fair averted head with a tender

caressing touch which would have softened most women's hearts, however incensed against him; but though Sybil's eyes obstinately refused to meet his, and he felt her flinch and shiver under his touch, she was not incensed. The only thought in her mind was, "If he knew all he would never speak to me so," and the weight of shame and remorse it brought with it made her seem cruelly hard and sullen as she murmured:

"Please let me go. I am not angry, and you have a right to say anything you like to me; but not now—let me go now," and, bitterly disappointed, he was compelled to hold his peace and allow her to hurry him back to the house. She would not re-enter the ball-room, however, and looking at her pale tear-stained face he had no desire to press it; but took her at once to the cloak-room, and left her there, without having been able to win one other word or look from her, while he went to seek for Jenny.

The music was still swelling and floating over the swift rush and tread of the dancers. The air was fragrant with the scent of roses and heliotrope. It wanted little more than six weeks to the time of his marriage, the day which he had been looking forward to through ten long, tranquil, blissful months; but there was no bliss or tranquillity in his heart at that moment. Was Sybil's love for him really wavering; or what—what had made her turn from him so strangely, so heartlessly? With all his love and trust in her, the question would smite upon him as he made his way among the dancers; and the handsome mocking face of Gareth Vane rose up suddenly in answer to it, and passed him with a triumphant brightness in the blue defiant eyes.

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